



For Immediate Release

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North Ed, Traverse Connect, TBA Credit Union Announce 2025 Outstanding Educators

TRAVERSE CITY, Mich. – Ten educators have been selected to receive the 2025 Outstanding Educator Award in recognition of their dedication to student success and their positive impact on the school community. Their colleagues and the community nominated them for this prestigious honor.

Through a partnership between Northwest Education Services (North Ed), Traverse Connect and TBA Credit Union, the Outstanding Educator Awards recognize school employees in northwest Michigan who have made exemplary contributions to the academic success of students, educational collaboration and professional development.

Listed in alphabetical order, this year's outstanding educators are:

- Elizabeth Blondia - History & English Teacher, The Leelanau School
- Dr. Nick Ceglarek - Superintendent, Northwest Education Services
- Tanya Helman - 2nd Grade Teacher, TCAPS Courtade Elementary School
- Danielle Humphrey - REMC Support Specialist, Northwest Education Services
- Kerry LaBonte - German Teacher, TCAPS West Senior High School
- Ryan Maas - Student Achievement Data Specialist, Northwest Education Services
- Christine Porter - HR Director, Suttons Bay Public Schools
- Kirk Ranney - Principal, TCAPS Blair Elementary School
- Charles Taylor - Band Director, Grand Traverse Area Catholic Schools
- Betsy Wells - Administrative Assistant, TCAPS Central High School

“These Outstanding Educators are a testament to the extraordinary talent and dedication within our educational community,” said Karen Browne, president and CEO of TBA Credit Union.

“These educators excel in their academic instruction but also embody the essence of true mentorship. They inspire a love for learning, foster critical thinking, and cultivate an environment where students feel valued and empowered. Their commitment to excellence and ability to connect with students make them truly deserving of this honor.”

Established by the then Traverse City Area Chamber of Commerce in 1984, the Outstanding Educator Awards program is facilitated by North Ed in collaboration with TBA Credit Union and Traverse Connect. Each year, nominations are submitted by public, private and parochial school

administrators, colleagues, students, parents and community members throughout the five counties of Antrim, Benzie, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska and Leelanau. Nomination materials are reviewed by a selection committee representative of school and community leaders and scored based on points awarded for demonstrated educational excellence.

This year's outstanding educators will be recognized at an awards ceremony beginning at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, June 4 at the City Opera House in Traverse City. The event is open to the public.

For more on the Outstanding Educator Awards program and to view past recipients, visit North Ed's [website](#).

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